

## **Assemblymember Fran Pavley**

### **IN BRIEF**

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Requires the State Department of Education to conduct a study to determine which of the California Standards Tests or combination of those tests, is equivalent to the English and language arts portion or the mathematics portion of the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).

### **THE ISSUE**

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High school students are spending an increasing amount of time taking tests required by the state and federal government. Some of these tests are likely duplicative, as is the case with the CST and the CAHSEE. This legislation is needed to make California's testing system more efficient, and to combine tests where the state has determined that the material is equivalent.

### **EXISTING LAW**

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Under state law, commencing with the 2003-04 school year, all students must pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) to be eligible for a diploma.

The exam covers math, reading and language use. Before the end of their senior year, California public school students have six opportunities to try to pass the exit exam. Under state law, a 10th-grader can take the test one time, an 11th-grader twice and a 12th-grader three times.

Students who finish 12th grade without passing the exit exam can enroll in adult school and then have two opportunities per year to take the test, as long as they are enrolled in school, according to the State Department of Education.

### **THE SOLUTION**

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Requires the State Department of Education to conduct a study to determine which of the California Standards Tests or combination of

those tests, is equivalent to the English and language arts portion or the mathematics portion of the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).

### **BACKGROUND**

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The exit exam consists of two parts, math and English, given on consecutive days. Each part usually takes students fewer than four hours to complete. The exam is untimed; students may take as long as they need during each of the two days. Passage is required to receive a diploma.

The math section tests students on sixth-and seventh-grade skills, plus Algebra 1, typically taught in eighth or ninth grade. This section includes 80 multiple-choice questions. Students must get a 55 percent score to pass.

The English language arts portion tests students on ninth-and 10th-grade reading and writing skills. It consists of 72 multiple-choice questions and one essay question. Students must get a 60 percent score to pass.

Nationwide, 23 states have graduation exams and four more are phasing them in by 2012. Most states offer options for students with special needs and those who are learning English.

### **SUPPORT**

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Association of California School Administrators (ACSA – sponsor), California Council for Adult Education – Los Angeles Metropolitan Section, CA Federation of Teachers, LACOE, Riverside County Schools Advocacy Assoc.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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